



## Milltown Reservoir Sediments Operable Unit

Milltown Reservoir/Clark Fork River Superfund Site

July 2006

# Summer Update: Site Activities and Status

## Milltown Reservoir Draw Down Status

The first visible step of the Milltown Reservoir cleanup project came with a “push of a button” as the reservoir draw down began on June 1, 2006.

After the first week, the reservoir had dropped by 5.5 feet. By the end of June, the reservoir had dropped more than 8 feet. The reservoir is now at its minimum pool level for the current flow, and any additional lowering of the water level will occur naturally as flow decreases. EPA estimates that it will take until mid-July to reach the goal of a full 10-foot draw down. The draw down is necessary to:

1. Allow additional site exploration to help with cleanup design plans
2. Conduct precautionary stabilization work on the I-90 and Highway 200 bridges.
3. Set the stage for other needed site work later this fall

The draw down is proceeding as planned. Much less sediment has been scoured



*Photo of reservoir draw down from autumn 2002*

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from the reservoir than predicted (during June, about 8,000-9,000 tons were scoured) and, as a result, turbidity levels have been close to normal for the spring high flow. There has been no increase in dissolved arsenic or copper from the draw down.

Monitoring continues on a daily basis both upstream and downstream of the dam. Daily monitoring results are available at <ftp://milltown.envirocon.com> or on EPA's web site (page 4).

## Work Planned for Area Bridges

As the Milltown Reservoir level drops and the dam is removed, the five bridges crossing the Blackfoot River near project area are likely to settle a bit. These bridges are the two I-90 bridges, the Highway 200 bridge, the railroad bridge, and the pedestrian bridge.

### **I-90 and Highway 200 Bridges**

EPA has been working diligently with the State of Montana, the U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers and the Corps' contractors on precautionary measures to stabilize the I-90 and Highway 200 bridges. The Bridge Mitigation Report is complete and designs are underway. EPA has new information about the designs and planned bridge upgrades, and work is scheduled to begin this fall. EPA will hold a public meeting on July 17 (see page 4) to describe the upcoming bridge work in more detail.

### Railroad Bridge

The rail road bridge is being built by Montana Rail Link. This bridge work will be coordinated with other bridge work.

### Pedestrian Bridge

The plan is to replace the existing County pedestrian bridge over the Blackfoot River with a new bridge (with no piers in the river channel). Missoula County plans to seek bids this fall and replace the bridge next summer. Funding for the pedestrian bridge replacement comes from the 2005 Transportation Appropriation for Milltown Redevelopment projects and EPA. Missoula County is seeking funds from the Montana Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP) to help offset the bridge replacement costs.

### Wells and Groundwater Quality

After the draw down last fall, some area residents had problems with the water level in their wells. EPA responded quickly to investigate the problems and, when related to the drawdown, resolved the problem by lowering the pump, deepening the well, or by installing new wells. **EPA, not the property owner, paid for these improvements.**

To guard against possible problems resulting from the current and future draw downs, EPA is installing



*Artist's rendition of post-remedy confluence, looking upstream from the bluff above Milltown Dam.*

approximately 10 new wells for area residents with older, shallower wells along the Blackfoot River and in West Riverside—at **no expense to residents.**

Missoula County, through an agreement with and funding from EPA, is offering **free arsenic testing** for wells in the Bonner/Milltown area. For more information, please contact Peter Nielsen of the Missoula City-County Health Department (see page 4).

Missoula County has worked with area residents to establish a voluntary well monitoring network. At a minimum, the County and Envirocon will monitor these wells four times a year for arsenic. Any residents with a well found to be above the new federal drinking water standard (10 parts per billion arsenic) will be supplied with bottled water or a new well will be drilled.

**If you experience problems with the water level in your well or have questions about your water quality, and you think it might be related to the drawdown, please call EPA.**

### Cleanup Designs

EPA convened a Design Review Team in the fall of 2005 to review and comment on the cleanup designs for the Milltown Reservoir. Team members include EPA, the State of Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and NRDP, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Confederated Salish

and Kootenai Tribes, and representing the public, Missoula County and the Clark Fork River Technical Assistance Committee. The following design reports are available on EPA's web site (page 4):

- Final Remedial Action Monitoring Plan (May 2006)
- Final Contingency Plans for Drinking Water, Surface Water and Irrigators (May 2006)
- Final Design Report for Reservoir Draw Down (May 2006)
- Final Remedial Design Work Plan (June 2006)

## Redevelopment

The Milltown Redevelopment Working Group continues to meet monthly to discuss and implement the Conceptual Redevelopment Plan for the Milltown/Bonner area. In recent months, the governance, outreach, history and culture, and recreation subcommittees have been particularly busy. Highlights include:

- Creation of a Community Council for the Bonner/Milltown area
- Discussions about preserving portions of the powerhouse and how to best celebrate the area's rich history
- Additional planning and funding for trails and bridges

The next workgroup meeting will be at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, July 25, 2006, at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Bonner. These meetings are open to the public.

## Community Involvement Plan

In May, EPA interviewed more than 50 area residents to gather information to be used to update its formal *Community*

*Involvement Plan*. The intent of the interviews was to gauge how much people understood about cleanup plans for the reservoir, what their concerns might be, how EPA might address those concerns, and how to best communicate with area residents. The *Community Involvement Plan* is nearly complete. Copies will be available on EPA's web page, at the local Information Repositories, or by calling EPA (page 4).

In anticipation of the project moving into a more active, construction phase this fall, EPA will use information from the interviews to develop a health and safety guide for area residents.



### What are the Three Rs?

The kids at Bonner School might tell you the three R's are reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic, but for the Milltown Reservoir Site project, the three Rs are Remediation, Restoration, and Redevelopment.

- **Remediation:** Consists of cleanup activities, directed towards removing sediments and restoring a clean water supply. EPA is the lead agency.
- **Restoration:** Composed of the projects to restore a functional confluence when remediation is complete. The State of Montana and Site Trustees lead this aspect.
- **Redevelopment:** The Redevelopment Working Group is actively involved in planning for preservation of historic and cultural resources, and exploration of recreational, educational, and economic development opportunities for the community. The public is encouraged to participate in monthly meetings and on subcommittees for the group.

Ideally, the three Rs are integrated in such a way that each phase builds upon the other, while considering the community's vision and eventual beneficial reuse goals.

## Upcoming Activities: Fall 2006

- Work on I-90 and Hwy 200 bridges begins.
- Missoula County, with funding from EPA, plans to install a new trail along Highway 210 (Old 10 East) to provide a safe trail alternative for area bikers and walkers.
- Cleanup preparation, including infrastructure construction, begins at the Milltown Reservoir.



## Milltown Public Meeting to Discuss Upcoming Bridge Work

**Monday, July 17, 2006**

**6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

**Bonner School Gym**

EPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and their contractors will present information about the upgrades planned for the I-90 bridges, Highway 200 bridge, and pedestrian bridge over the Blackfoot River.

## For More Information

Please visit EPA's web page: <a href="http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/sites/mt/milltowncfr/home.html">http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/sites/mt/milltowncfr/home.html</a>		Diana Hammer, EPA Public Outreach (406) 457-5040 <a href="mailto:hammer.diana@epa.gov">hammer.diana@epa.gov</a>	
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